2014 IN CULTURE: A LOOK BACK

TAYLOR SHAKES IT OFF, AND KIM TAKES IT OFF. PAGES 16-20

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A year in review

Philadelphia Moments. From the rise of Philly Jesus to the death of firefighter Joyce Craig-Lewis, Metro looks back at a year in local history. PAGES 02-06

A firefighters helmet and the flag are reflected in a fire truck's windshield at funeral services for firefighter Lt. Joyce Craig-Lewis. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

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10 Biggest Philly stories of 2014

Jennifer Lydon is 'Happier than she's ever been' outside Metro's office in Center City./ CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Becoming Jen Lydon

Brian Lydon, the long-time Metro ad-salesman, revealed to his co-workers on March 19 that he was living a lie. Brian Lydon and his slick-backed hair and pinstriped suit were a mask, he told his assembled co-workers. The real Brian was a leggy blond who enjoyed wearing high-heels and lipstick. Brian Lydon was in reality Jen Lydon, a transgender woman. In June, almost three months after coming out to her co-workers for the first time, Metro profiled Jen Lydon and her lifelong battle with gaining acceptance from family and friends.

Kurt Vile Mural

Kurt Vile, a Lansdowne-born singer/songwriter learned via text message in that his prized Fishtown mural was defaced. Vile's manager texted him and mural painter Steve Powers,with a photo of the white-washed artwork with the message, "RIP."

"We were both like, 'What the F___," Vile said. "By the end of it we were just like, 'That's ridiculous. We'll figure this out.'"

DJ Lee Mayjahs was caught white-handed painting over the Powers (aka ESPO) original, which was created in conjunction with Vile's 2013 album "Wakin' on a Pretty Daze." Mayjahs confessed through an assortment of online venues. The paint was eventually power-washed off, and his mural was restored to its original luster.

PAIGE OZAROSKI, METRO

Philly Jesus

2014 was the year of Philly Jesus.

Mike Grant, the bearded Christ imitator who preaches to tourists and locals at LOVE Park, uses an iPhone as a bible. The 27-year-old Olney native struggled with homeless and addiction before finding Christ and deciding to imitate Christ full-time.

CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Philly Jesus started going viral after he was spotted confronting an Upper Darby-based group of black Israelites known for their racist, misogynistic, and hateful speeches directed at everyone not part of their cult, usually at top volume in front of The Shops at Liberty Place.

1 NEWS

Top 3

The best of Metro.us

1 Can you guess 2014's most Googled fashion designer?

2 Recipe: Make coffee-glazed walnuts for your New Years party

3 The best-selling concerts of 2014

On the go

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Students Rap Video

In October, a rap video featuring students from several Northeast Philly schools engaging in illegal activities was posted on Youtube and went viral. The video for "Creep with Me," by local rapper Apex P, showed teens using drugs, drinking alcohol, twerking and even holding a gun. The video was filmed on a 70-acre vacant lot in Bridesburg known as "Cokies." City Councilman Bobby Henon expressed concern and worked with National Grid, which owns the lot, to implement new security patrols. Twitter exploded with commentary from the students about fallout from the video.

YOUTUBE

PPD

Gay couple assault

In September, a gay couple was attacked by a group of 15 people while walking in Rittenhouse. The attackers insulted them for being gay. One victim required surgery to have his jaw wired shut for eight weeks. As news of the attack spread and police released surveillance footage of the suspects, social media sleuths scoured the internet and identified the attackers. Three suspects, of Bucks County, were arrested and charged with aggravated assault in the case.

Cold Killer

On Dec. 15, troubled Iraq veteran Bradley William Stone, 35, killed six members of his ex-wife's family in a daylong rampage across several towns in Montgomery County. Stone's own two daughters, aged 5 and 8, were unharmed and he dropped them off with a friend. Stone was found dead in the woods less than a mile from his Pennsburg home a day after the rampage. He killed himself by overdosing on antidepressants, authorities announced last week.

Russia Annexes Always Sunny in Philly

A bizarre adaptation of Philly native Rob McElhenney's "Always Sunny in Philadelphia," – called "In Moscow, Always Sunny" – premiered in Russia in May. The adaptation for TNT, one of Russia's only privately owned TV channels, is reportedly an official adaptation and recreates Always Sunny, episode for episode, with Russian actors portraying the lovable gang. But there are a few changes. Gag man Charlie Day's character, Charlie, is named "Fat" in the Russian version. And instead of a bar called Paddy's in South Philly, the Russian show centers around a bar called "Philadelphia" in Moscow.

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Fallen Firewoman

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On Dec. 9 Joyce Craig-Lewis. 36, became the first female firefighter to die in the line of duty. Craig-Lewis headed toward the basement to stave off a fire in a West Oak Lane home, which allowed her fellow fighters to rescue an elderly woman. Firefighters found Craig-Lewis in the basement, but couldn't get her out before she died. She left behind a 16-month-old daughter and a 16-year-old son. Craig was buried in the same cemetery as Lauretha Vaird, who 18 years earlier was the first female police officer killed in the line of duty.

CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Pot Smokers want reform

After Philadelphia decriminalized possession of small amounts of marijuana, marijuana legalization activists N.A. Poe and former Marine Mike Whiter set their sights on a bigger goal – statewide legalization. They are planning to lobby Democratic Gov.-elect Tom Wolf, who gave vocal support during his campaign to marijuana decriminalization and legal medical use. Poe ran for City Council on a pro-marijuana platform. Whiter was the first Philadelphian to be cited under Philadelphia's new decriminalized marijuana laws.

The holy father is coming in 2015

After months of speculations, Pope Francis confirmed in November that he will make his first visit to the U.S. to attend the 2015 World Meeting of Families in Philadelphia. Earlier in 2014, Mayor Michael Nutter and Gov. Tom Corbett participated in a joint visit to the Vatican to make their personal entreaty to the Pope to come to Philadelphia.

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STEADi

Mummers change their route

Tradition. The Mummers won't be strutting from South Philly this year, as parade moves to Center City, where the viewers are.

The Fralinger String Band performs at the 2014 Mummers Day Parade. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER, METRO

Shorter and quicker, that's the order of day for one of Philadelphia's signature events, the New Year's Day Mummers parade, that dates back to 1876.

The changes aren't to everyone's liking. For the first time, the parade will start near City Hall, and then move south for one mile down Broad Street to Washington Avenue.

That's a sharp detour from the traditional path of the Mummers, and also a significantly shorter route. The march will be but one mile this Jan. 1, compared to three miles when the route ran in reverse — starting deep in South Philly and heading north.

The city says the Mummers themselves asked for the changes, but that still doesn't sit well with some in South Philly. "It was supposed to be something that originated downtown, and by downtown I mean South Philadelphia," said long-time resident Carol Veneziale, 61, while shopping along Passyunk Avenue.

"That's where the spirit came from, and I think we deserve to keep it here," she said.

"My friend has a house at Broad and Wharton, and it was great," said South Philly hairdresser Leslie Burnette, 27, who works just a block from Broad Street, where the Mummers strutted for decades.

"We could sit out on the stoop, and it became a yearly thing, the party, and all of South Philly, you could kind of go up and down the street in our whole neighborhood," Burnette said.

Leo Dignam, the parade director who is also the city's deputy director of parks and recreation, says now 95 percent of the approximately 100,000 spectators who attend the parade, watching about 8,000 mummers strut, dance and perform, watch the parade along the stretch from Washington Avenue north to Center City.

Order of the march

- The Fancy Division starts at 10 a.m., and they will march to the Convention Center to perform, and then march down Broad Street to Washington.
- The Comic Division take off at 10:30 a.m. The Wench Brigade begins at 12:30 p.m. The String Bands strut at 1:20 p.m

And most Mummers no longer live in South Philly.

"They were marching through South Philly to empty streets," said Dignam. "It's a great Philadelphia tradition. It isn't just a South Philly tradition – it's a Philadelphia tradition.

"Sometimes, you have to make a decision for the greater good," he said. "The action is in Center City."

In yesteryear, the parade sometimes lasted for 11 hours or more. But come Jan. 1, it starts at 10 a.m. at Market and 15th streets, and will likely wind up by 5:30 p.m.

The Comic Division take off at 10:30 a.m.

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Bariatric Surgeons (Left to right): Rohit Soans, MD; Tatyan M. Clarke, MD; Michael A. Edwards, MD, FACS

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THE YEAR IN PHOTOS

The best photography of 2014, from around the globe.

A competitor falls into muddy water during Tough Mudder at Phillip Island Grand Prix on March 22 in Australia.

A young scavenger extracts plastic from tons of trash in the Anlong Pi on June 11 in Siem Reap, Cambodia. / ALL PHOTOS GETTY IMAGES

A KURDISH WOMAN RUNS AWAY FROM AWATER CANNON DURING CLASHES WITH TURKISH SOLDIERS NEAR THE SYRIAN BORDER AFTER TURKISH AUTHORITIES TEMPORARILY CLOSED THE BORDER ON SEPTEMBER 22.

Malaysia Airlines Flight 370 smoulders in a field July 17 in Grabovo, Ukraine.

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OMG! Dutch Bitcoin Cyborg keeps currency under his skin

A Dutch entrepreneur has had computer chips implanted into his hands to securely store currencies like Bitcoin. Martijn Wismeijer, the co-founder of the startup MrBitcoin, which operates crypto-cash ATMs in and around Europe, underwent the painful procedure earlier this month.

The NFC (near-field communication) technology tags can be read by smartphones such as the Apple iPhone 6 and the Samsung Galaxy S5.

The chips can also be used to program a personalized alarm clock, and the Amsterdam-based Wismeijer hopes to throw away the keys to his house and install an NFC-enabled door lock.

He explains to Metro why the procedure isn't as extreme as it might seem.

omg!
Visit us online at Metro.us/omg for more interviews.

MARTIJN WISMEIJER

MARTIJN WISMEIJER

Don't you think you've gone too far?

Well, you don't know you want it until you have it. In a way, it is the same reaction people had before the Internet or mobile phones.

But isn't it dangerous for your health?

I am not sick, so my doctor is not going to help me inject something into my body. I think he has a fair point there. As long as the installation procedure is done correctly, I don't think there are any dangers myself, but the manufacturer clearly states the transponder device has not been tested or certified by any regulatory agency for implantation or use inside the human body.

You literally have the technology in your hands. How do you feel about it?

I feel that by supporting these biohacking developments we can learn what works and what doesn't. Now that I have used them for a few weeks, it is possible to store my Bitcoin in an encrypted format. In the not-so-distant future we will be able to implant new models with more functionality like vital health monitoring devices. WANISE MARTINEZ, METRO WORLD NEWS

Martijn Wismeijer thinks that a chip under his skin is less invasive than silicone breast implants, piercings or tattoos. / MARTIJN WISMEIJER

This might sting

Was the procedure painful?

"It was a bit painful at first, but after a few days my hands were no longer swollen. Now, almost three weeks after, only when I need to use them do I think about them. Otherwise, it is not an issue. Other than the fact that my friends now call me MrBitcoin, Chip or Bitcoin Cyborg, it's life as usual."

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Renewable energy industry

Electric cars hurt the most in oil price slump

Electric cars are likely to be hurt the most by lower oil prices within the renewable energy industry, according to a report that predicts a limited impact on wind-and solar-power companies.

The 45 percent plunge in Brent crude oil prices since the end of June also will slow the shift away from fossil fuels in oil-producing nations such as Saudi Arabia and drive up the cost of natural gas in the U.S., Bloomberg New Energy Finance said.

The findings show the effect of cheaper oil will vary from region to region, helping renewables in some parts and hurting the prospects for low-carbon energy in others. Electric vehicles are likely to be the clearest victim of cheaper oil, since they're less competitive with gasoline-powered cars when oil is cheaper.

If gasoline averages $2.09 a gallon in the U.S., electric vehicles may reach 6 percent of the market by 2020, the London-based research arm of Bloomberg LP forecasts. That's lower than the 9 percent share they could command if gasoline cost $3.34 a gallon, BNEF said. The current market share is less than 1 percent.

BLOOMBERG

Tesla Model S electric car / REUTERS

OMG! The FORTIS exoskeleton outfits the user with super strength and endurance

From "Aliens" to "Avatar" to "Iron Man," robotic exoskeleton suits have been a staple in sci-fi action battlewear. Now, this cinematic fantasy has become a reality thanks to a super-strength outfit that could increase users' productivity by 20 percent. Patricia Aelker, program manager at Lockheed Martin, the defense contractor behind the gear, explains to Metro how the exoskeleton transforms the average handyman into a superhuman worker.

The exoskeleton allows operators to lift heavy tools — up to 36 pounds —such as sandblasters as if they were weightless. / FORTIS

Where did the idea to make the FORTIS exoskeleton come from?
We have been working on exoskeleton research and development for more than five years. Originally, we began our research for assisting a soldier with carrying heavy equipment over long distances. The same principles of how the body works and expends energy can be applied to exoskeleton development for use in industrial settings.

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DMITRY BELYAEV, METRO WORLD NEWS

Question

Can it be used in the military?

This could be used in many different environments such as mining, the military and first responders.

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Top pop culture moments of 2014

Trending. Take a look back at the year's biggest celeb stories.

NED EHRBAR
@Nedrick
ned.ehrbar@metro.lu

1 #BreaktheInternet

Hashtag or no hashtag, I just checked and the Internet remains safely unbroken. But that doesn't mean this image of Kim Kardashian's physics-defying derriere hasn't broken something deep inside of me. Could be my spirit, could be my brain, tough to say. But while Ms. Kardashian may not have broken the Internet, she did successfully sear this image into our collective cultural brain. So, good job? But do you think the designer of that dress was saddened that we all assumed it was a trash bag at first?

PAPER MAGAZINE

2 The ultimate Oscar selfie

TWITTER / @THEELLENSHOW

Speaking of breaking the Internet, that's what Academy Awards host Ellen DeGeneres claimed she was trying to do with her star-studded selfie taken during the telecast — or at least she was trying to break Twitter. And DeGeneres's efforts were much more successful than Kardashian's, with the photo of DeGeneres along with Jennifer Lawrence, Channing Tatum, Meryl Streep, Julia Roberts, Bradley Cooper, Kevin Spacey, Brad Pitt, Lupita Nyong'o, the brother of Lupita Nyong'o and part of Jared Leto becoming the most retweeted photo ever.

3 Elevator fight

Grainy surveillance footage from May 5, 2014 was seen 'round the world. On their way out of a Met Gala after-party, Solange Knowles lunges past sister Beyonce to unleash hell on brother-in-law Jay Z — and TMZ got its hands on the footage. Sadly, much like the rumors of marital strife that swirled around Beyonce and Jay Z all summer, this slap-fight may have been faked solely to boost ticket sales for their tour.

GETTY IMAGES

4 Justin Bieber's mug shot

GETTY IMAGES

After starting off 2014 with this glassy-eyed mug shot after he was arrested for drag racing, driving under the influence and whiningly resisting arrest, Justin Bieber managed to make it out of 2014 unscathed — well, pretty much. He's still juggling multiple pending court cases for a DUI, assaulting a driver and egging his neighbor's house.

5 'Too Many Cooks'

YOUTUBE, ADULT SWIM

Finally recovered from the absurd, sinister, TV-inspired trip that was the warped "Adult Swim" viral hit "Too Many Cooks"? Time to fire it up again. There's probably a detail or two you missed, anyway. The blend of '80s TV nostalgia, absurdism and blood-curdling terror is a beautiful pop culture stew to be savored again and again.

6 'I am not famous anymore'

Professionally, 2014 was a mixed bag for Shia LaBeouf. While his full-frontal work in Lars Von Trier's two-part "Nymphomaniac" didn't generate much excitement, his WWII tank drama "Fury" was a hit. But all that was easily overshadowed by what the real LaBeouf was doing in Berlin, LA and New York. Whether he was wearing a paper bag, having staring contests with strangers or getting arrested outside Broadway musicals, LaBeouf was tough to ignore.

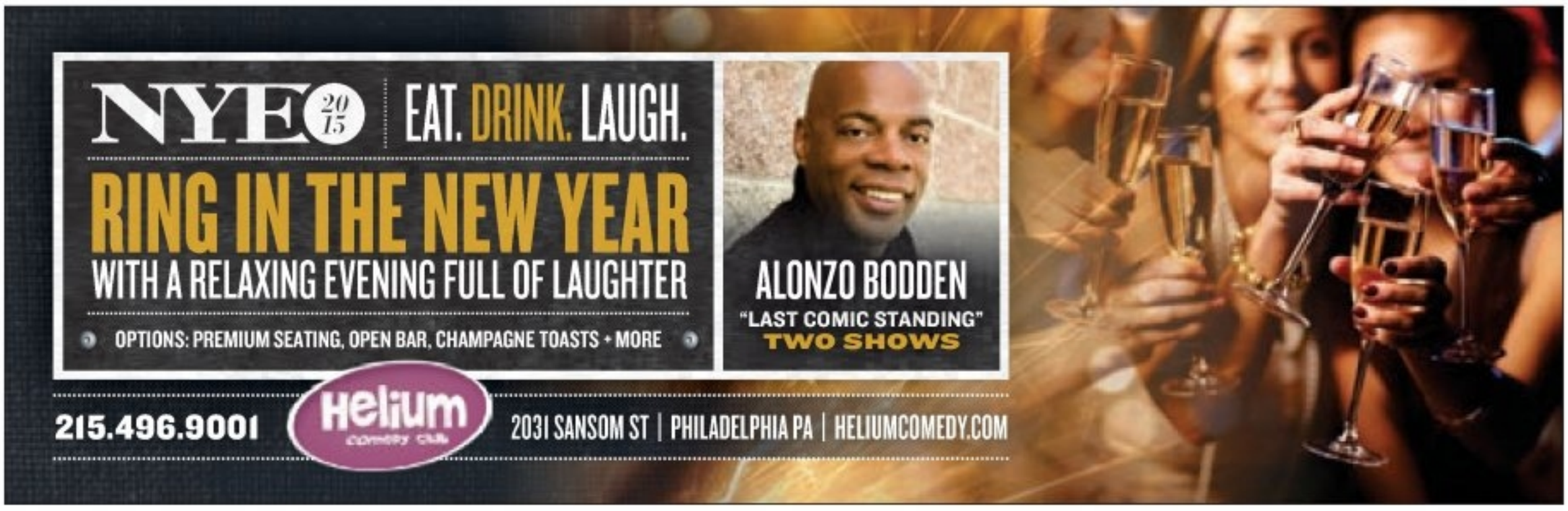
GETTY IMAGES

2 CULTURE

Premiere

'Fifty Shades of Grey' coming to Berlin film festival

In a move that makes Germany's prestigious Berlinale film festival seem kind of desperate, "Fifty Shades of Grey" will celebrate its international premiere there in February. The press release even goes so far as to call the roles of Christian Grey (Jamie Dornan) and Anastasia Steele (Dakota Johnson) "iconic." Guys, come on. This is soft-core S&M porn originally written as fan fiction for "Twilight," an already pretty terrible book series. Iconic doesn't really factor into it. **NED EHRBAR**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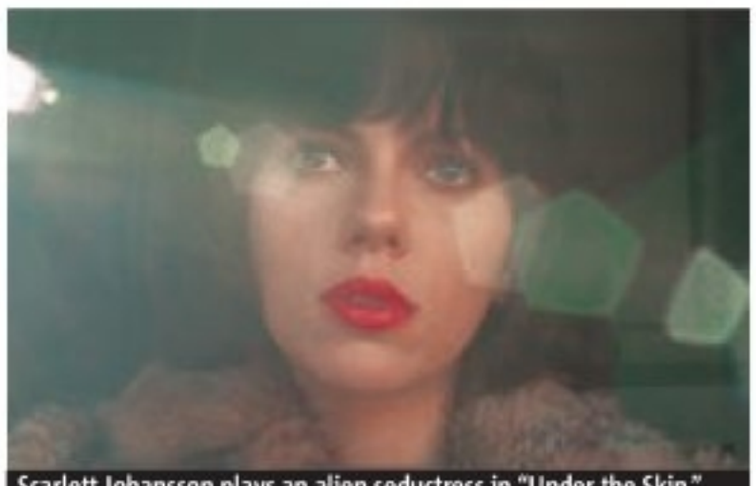
The 10 best films of 2014


Scarlett Johansson plays an alien seductress in "Under the Skin," our pick for best film of 2014. / A24

List. Our favorite movie of the year featured ScarJo. We also loved us some Wes Anderson.

9 'Selma' The world's first studio picture about Martin Luther King Jr. could have been another turgid biopic. But it's a thrilling tale of a small but vital chapter in his life as well as the grunt work of activism.

10 'Edge of Tomorrow' The first two-thirds of this Tom Cruise sci-fi are so good — it is "Groundhog Day" with aliens, after all — that the so-so third that follows is easy to excuse. More funny/clever than rip-roaring (though that, too), this — not interchangeable Marvel romps — is what should be clogging multiplexes.

8 'Two Days, One Night' It's easy to take for granted Belgium's Jean-Pierre and Luc Dardenne ("Kid with a Bike"), who reliably churn out deeply humanist and gripping dramas that often play like nail-biting thrillers. Their latest is even better than normal, with Marion Cotillard rushing like mad to save her crappy job.

7 'Inherent Vice' The year's funniest comedy is, of course, an adaptation of the nonadaptable Thomas Pynchon.

6 'Dear White People' Justin Simien's temperature taking of modern times as reflected through campus life wasn't really about stupid white people so much as about the diversity of black life never shown on screens.

5 'We Are the Best!' Amid all the misery and tragedy of this year, there was always this: a joyous comedy about Swedish tween punk rock girls who take themselves very seriously.

4 'Listen Up Philip' Jason Schwartzman's young, cartoonishly pompous novelist wasn't the year's worst sociopath, but he was the saddest — an upstart trying to be the kind of literary jerk of a bygone era.

3 'National Gallery' Frederick Wiseman has been cranking out observational documentaries on institutions for half a century. This look at the London museum is more of the same, only more brilliant than usual.

2 'The Grand Budapest Hotel' Wes Anderson's latest is so hilarious that its despair isn't noticeable till a second viewing.

1 'Under the Skin' "Lucy" turned Scarlett Johansson into the master of the universe. She was merely an alien seductress in this mood piece, in which she trolled Glasgow luring bros to deaths. It's also a study of ScarJo, celebrity: someone outside of us, lusted after yet unobtainable, who ultimately can never be one of us.

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Music: Women who ruled 2014

This year solidified something that's been clear for a few years now: When it comes to pop music, the ladies are killing it. Sure, the men put in a good showing, but when you turn on the radio (or stream via Spotify or Pandora or beam it in from space on Sirius XM), you're going to hear a lot of women. These are our picks for the women who defined pop music this year.

LISA WEIDENFELD AND EMILY LAURENCE

Beyonce

Her album came out in December 2013, technically, but there's no denying that it was one of the biggest hits of 2014. Plus, her cover of her own "Crazy in Love" turned the "Fifty Shades of Grey" trailer into something genuinely steamy.

Ariana Grande

It was hard to escape this pop star this year. Her album "My Everything" had three mega hits: "Problem" (with Iggy Azalea), "Break Free" (with Zedd) and "Love Me Harder" (with The Weeknd). Grande proved her Nickelodeon days are behind her.

Nicki Minaj

If you've gotten "Anaconda" out of your head once since you first heard it, we'd be surprised. Minaj scored another huge hit with this one, getting tons of hits for the music video co-starring Drake. The video set a Vevo record for the most views in its first 24 hours online.

Iggy Azalea

The rapper had a huge breakthrough year, teaming up with Charli XCX for "Fancy" and Ariana Grande for "Problem." And she claimed a piece of history: She's the only act besides the Beatles to have her first two top 100 Billboard hits rank Nos. 1 and 2.

Taylor Swift

Taylor Swift's reign continued this year with the success of her first strictly pop album, "1989." It debuted at No. 1 on the Billboard charts, and her "Shake It Off" video has over 356 million views. A massive stadium tour and endorsements helped the 25-year-old earn $57 million this year.

Lorde

Eighteen-year-old Lorde went from singer to producer this year by curating "The Hunger Games: Mockingjay — Part 1" soundtrack. Including artists such as CHVRCHES, The Chemical Brothers and her own song, "Flicker Beat," earned her respect from critics and teen fans.

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3 Ways to shake the winter blues

Winter doesn't have to mean going into hibernation mode. / GOODSHOT RF

SAD. Beat the "unholy alliance" of winter mood sappers.

With the shorter days and harsh weather of winter, many of us are left feeling out of whack. Sluggishness sets in, we binge on heavy comfort foods, motivation wanes and a general feeling of lethargy takes over.

"The dark and the cold create an unholy alliance with each other," says Dr. Norman E. Rosenthal, author of "Winter Blues."

According to Rosenthal, who first described seasonal affective disorder 30 years ago, levels of the feel-good hormone serotonin naturally drop during the dark days of winter. For a boost, we instinctively reach for sweet foods and simple carbs.

"What's happening is people are sort of medicating themselves with cakes and candies and eggnog," says Rosenthal. "Then you feel really badly about yourself because you feel like you're not in control."

For roughly half a million Americans, the blues are severe enough to be diagnosed as seasonal affective disorder. The good news is that there are steps you can take to get back to feeling like yourself.

MARIANNE HAYES
@MetroPhilly
letters@metro.us

Lighten up

Bring some more light into your home: Paint the walls light colors, and scrub your windows of any excess grime to really let the sunlight in. If you live in a space with limited exposure to natural light, Rosenthal advises investing in a fluorescent-based light box; it should put out about 10,000 lux of white light (not blue). Research has shown that 50 to 80 percent of light therapy users experience complete relief of symptoms.

Get out and exercise

You may need to give yourself a pep talk beforehand, but working out during the colder months is an excellent way to stave off the winter blues. "Bundle up and get out on a bright winter day," says Rosenthal. "If there's snow on the ground, the snow reflects a lot of light, and that can be very pleasant." But even if it's a cloudy day, you'll still benefit from a brisk walk: One hour of outdoor aerobic activity is comparable to 2 1/2 hours of light treatment.

PLUS

Tip

Watch your diet

Sweets might energize you in the short term, but they also pack on the pounds — not to mention whatever boost they may give your mood is followed by an intense crash. "Eating protein and slow-impact carbs, like lentil stew, doesn't create those peaks and dips in the blood sugar," says Rosenthal.

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Writing a great essay, step by step

Schoolwork.
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This new site says it will guide you through the writing process. / FUSE

Like many middle school and high school students, Mya Dunlop's son Myles dreaded writing term papers and reports — to the point where he would procrastinate for hours before getting anything onto the page.

"He had a lot of struggles with writing," says Dunlop.

While brainstorming how to make papers and reports more manageable, mother and son came up with the idea for MyloWrites. It's an online program that guides students through the writing process and, hopefully, makes writing less intimidating.

Dunlop teamed up with education specialist Stacy Rosenblum to create the program, which students can try out free for a month at MyloWrites.com before signing up for the $25 a month service.

Getting things organized

As they researched, Dunlop and Rosenblum realized that for many students, getting started writing is often the hardest step.

"Hardest for Myles was looking at a blank screen at the beginning," recalls Dunlop. "Organizing essays can be hard. All essays have a prescribed structure, but many teachers don't necessarily teach that structure."

MyloWrites is designed to help students see and understand that structure.

"[The site] takes the student step by step," Rosenblum says. "What they would do is start with the idea for the paper and then do research and put in the quotations they want to use. It helps them with creating an outline and then all of that work — that they do themselves — gets pumped into the essay process."

Breaking up the work

Through a series of prompts on MyloWrites.com, students are instructed to:

- Create a thesis statement
- Write an outline
- Back up their arguments
- Craft a conclusion

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Finances

What to do if you haven't saved enough for college

Soaring college costs mean many families will not be able to save enough to pay for a typical undergraduate education. If you haven't been saving since your child's birth, or you have but it's not nearly enough, here's what to do now.

Having an honest conversation about what your family can afford is a big step. DIGITAL VISION

1 Think about costs College consultants recommend applying for at least one financial "safety school" — one whose costs you know you can handle — in addition to "target" schools that you can pay for with a stretch of your resources and "reach" schools that may be out of your range but could surprise you with generous financial aid.

2 Consider your alternatives Having your child attend a nearby school so he or she can live at home, at least for the first year or two, can dramatically cut the cost of college. The average net price for room and board was $9,800 at public schools and $11,190 at private colleges.

3 Cut your spending Paying as much of the bill as possible out of your current income will help you minimize the debt that you or your student need to take on. That means employing the usual budgeting hacks: eating out less and curtailing vacations.

4 Craft a strategy Parents should limit their borrowing to what they expect to pay off within 10 years, say experts. REUTERS

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Spinal Cord Injuries and All Medically Related
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GENE SIMMONS: HOW TO BREAK INTO THE MUSIC INDUSTRY

GENE SIMMONS
WIREIMAGE

Gene Simmons, who co-founded KISS in 1973, made a name for himself performing with the band, known for groundbreaking live shows. These days, he's probably just as well-known as a reality show star. But he's back in the news with a third act: the release of his new book "Me, Inc." subtitled "Build an Army of One, Unleash Your Inner Rock God, Win in Life and Business." I asked the famously ornery Simmons about his band's successes and how young musicians can make their mark.

How did you originally pursue your path in music, and what do you recommend to others?
Unfortunately, a new musical act will not have the same opportunities I had. I don't see the opportunity for another Beatles, or Zeppelin or even KISS.

How did you go about networking when you first started out?
When we first started in 1973, the word "networking" meant nothing. This was before cable TV, before anything digital, before MTV or VH1, before CDs, before DVDs, before cellphones, before computers, before the Web, before voicemail — and we still made it.

How can people build the self-confidence required to succeed?
You're on your own, no more mommy holding your hand. You can't pee like a puppy if you wanna run like a wolf.

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danschawbel.com

Quoted

"Now, unfortunately I do not see the opportunity for another Beatles, or Zeppelin or even KISS." Simmons

PGW
The Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW) is the largest municipally-owned gas utility in the nation, supplying gas service in the City of Philadelphia to over 500,000 customers.
PGW is looking for: Service Technicians-HVAC
This is a full-time (40 hours/week) union-covered position with a starting salary of $13.41 an hour.

Qualifications
- High School Diploma or GED, valid PA driver's license and "clean" driving record
- A mechanical or construction background as a pipe fitter, plumber's helper or similar work experience, if in the gas/utilities industry this is a plus
- Experience in providing residential customer service (e.g., carpentry, cable technicians; plumber's helpers) or similar work
- Ability to work in inclement weather on any assigned shift including weekends, holidays

Overview
Service Technician will accompany skilled service personnel in designated areas and work rotating shifts under variable job conditions on a customer's premise. Will provide physical help as needed on service work and street leak relief, act as contact person for delivery service between outlying stations, and deliver parts and materials to various locations. This position requires a considerable amount of both physical and mental effort; activities and duties may have a direct bearing on the safety of the public.

Residency
Philadelphia Gas Works (PGW) requires new employees to live within the city/county of Philadelphia for the duration of their employment with the company. If a non-resident at time of hire, must relocate within 12 months.

To Apply
Complete an online application for Service Technician-HVAC at www.pgworks.com

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*National Research Council. (2003) Elder mistreatment: Abuse, neglect and exploitation in an aging America. Washington, D.C.: The National Academies Press

Horoscope

♑ Capricorn | Dec. 22-Jan. 20. Take the word "failure" out of your vocabulary. Focus on what you want, take charge, reach your destination and ring in the new year on a high note.

♒ Aquarius | Jan. 21-Feb. 18. Include loved ones in your plans. Someone will use emotional blackmail to get you to do something. Say what's on your mind.

♓ Pisces | Feb. 19-March 20. Difficulties while traveling will prove stressful. Confiding in a close friend will help you find a solution to a relationship problem.

♈ Aries | March 21-April 20. You are on the right path, so don't let criticism or disparaging comments upset you. Your success will be enough to silence critics.

♉ Taurus | April 21-May 21. Personal and business associates will be impressed with your knowledge and charisma. Beneficial changes lie ahead. A new partnership is promising.

♊ Gemini | May 22-June 20. You will receive advice from an elderly friend or relative. A partnership needs adjustment if you want to strengthen your bond.

♋ Cancer | June 21-July 22. A lot of issues can be resolved. Let your thoughts be known, and don't hesitate to make a move. People will gravitate to you.

♌ Leo | July 23-Aug. 22. You are dynamic, and you will attract favorable attention if you attend an event. Someone you meet will play an important role in your plans for the coming year.

♍ Virgo | Aug. 23-Sept. 22. Family members will be hard to deal with. This is a great time to get together with friends or colleagues. Socialize and have fun.

♎ Libra | Sept. 23-Oct. 22. Stimulate your senses. Try something you have been dreaming about or visit a place that intrigues you.

♏ Scorpio | Oct. 23-Nov. 21. Let everyone know what you have to offer. Your co-workers will be impressed with your suggestions to improve the workplace.

♐ Sagittarius | Nov. 22-Dec. 21. It's a good time to make travel arrangements. The destination is not as important as who you will be spending time with. EUGENIA LAST

Sudoku: Easy and hard

			2	4			3	8
6				5		9		
2			9				4	
8		1					6	7
	2						8	
4	5					3		9
	8				9			4
		5		1				2
7	6			8	4			

						3	6	
	2							8
8		6	9	7	2			
		5		9	1		3	
	6		2		7		9	
	1		6	8		7		
			1	4	9	5		3
4							8	
	5	3						

How to play
Fill in the grid so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved. You solve the puzzle with reasoning and logic.

Best of 2014

Through the holidays, Metro takes a look at the issues important to letter writers in 2014. Whether it was gun violence, domestic violence or world conflicts (or cyclists!) Metro readers had a lot to say. Here are some excerpts:

Cyclists

Who are all the bikers who choose to ride against traffic? It's so dangerous for both parties: With a bike going 10 miles per hour and a vehicle going 30-40 miles per hour heading toward one another, that doesn't leave time to prevent a head-on collision.
MIKE DISCOLO (MAY 21)

Have these people saying they prefer to ride a bike against the traffic ever heard of a great invention called a rearview mirror? They make them for bicycles, too. You can ride with the traffic AND see what's behind you!
SUZANNE PALAU (MAY 21)

Eighty percent of bike-car collisions occur at intersections. Motorists look only in the direction of oncoming traffic before bolting out. If you bike against traffic flow, you are totally invisible to motorists. According to the League of American Bicyclists, 14 percent of bike-car crashes involve wrong-way bicycling, while only 3 percent involve motorists striking a bicyclist from behind.
BOB STERNER (MAY 22)

People who complain about cyclists are not trying to compare pedestrians' behavior with that of cyclists. They are complaining about cyclists' reckless endangerment of both pedestrians and drivers. Cyclists should take responsibility for their own behavior.
ELIZABETH HENDERSON (SEPT. 30)

Yet not one of these people ever says the police should crack down on lawless pedestrians. Could it be that these two-faced hypocrites are themselves lawless pedestrians with a severe conflict of interest?
JACK DICKENSON (NOV. 4)

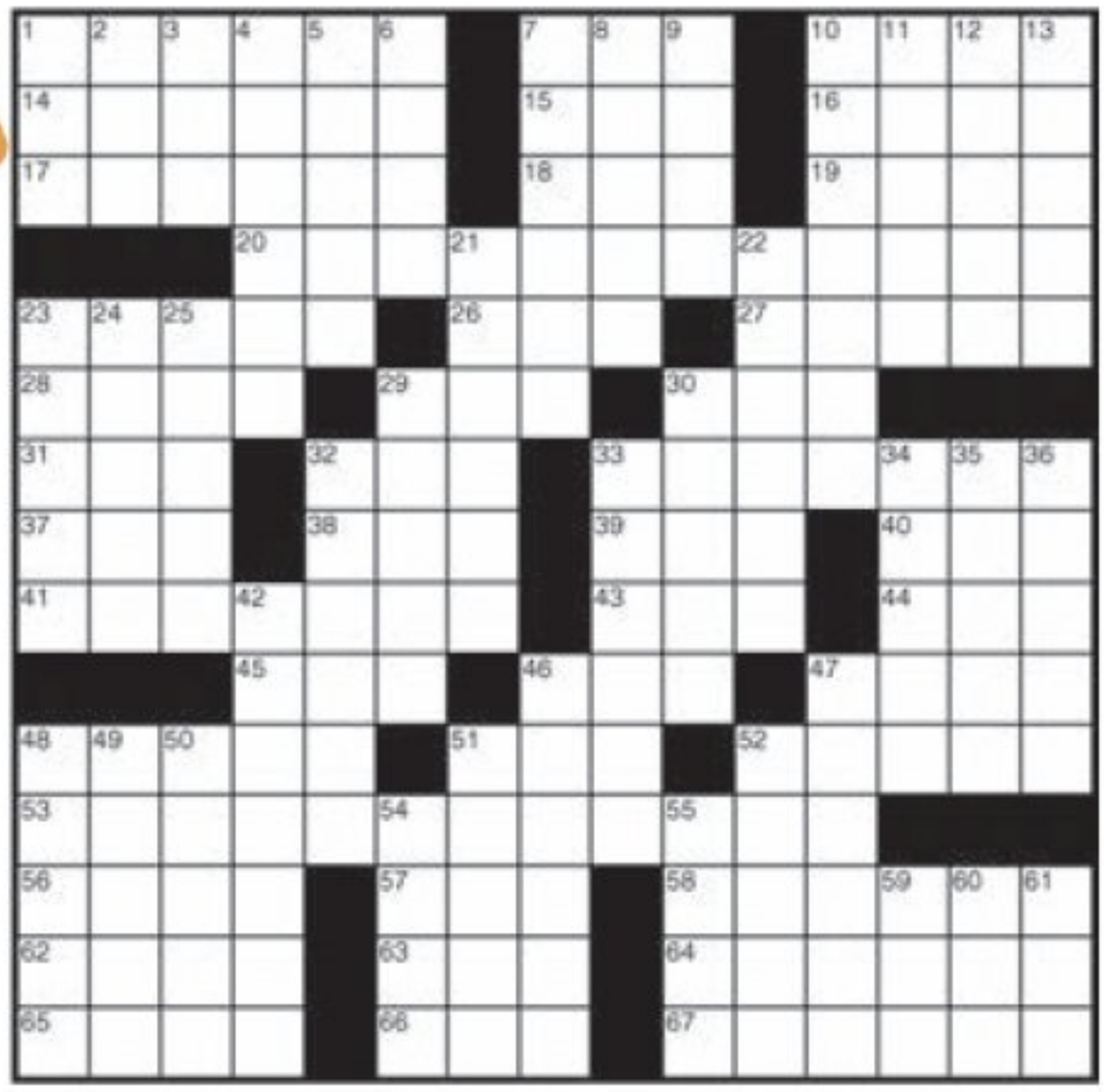
letters@metro.us
Keep them as brief as possible, preferably under 100 words. Metro reserves the right to edit all letters. Please include your name and contact info.

Crossword

Across
1 Stunned, with "over"
7 Happy shout
10 Tattered
14 Colorful percher
15 Absent-minded murmur
16 Low-fat spread
17 Fancy
18 NASA counterpart
19 El — (ocean current)
20 Blue wildflowers (hyph.)
23 Expand
26 Gore and Capone
27 Not trendy
28 Bouquet
29 Road "beetles"
30 Marshy place
31 Ullmann of cinema
32 Food steamer
33 Left the union
37 Catwoman, to Batman
38 Dazzle
39 Villain's laugh
40 Caviar, actually
41 Like a zebra
43 Classified items
44 Betrayer
45 None at all
46 DJ's supply
47 Stick around
48 F. — Fitzgerald
51 Stickum
52 Turned toward
53 Celt halter, hopefully (2 wds.)
56 Pakistan's language
57 Web suffix
58 Damaged by hail
62 Raced
63 Med. plan
64 Drove a volleyball
65 This place
66 Lubber's aye
67 Squire around

Down
1 — and hiss
2 Bobby of the NHL
3 End up ahead
4 Casual shoe
5 Singer — John
6 Venison
7 Potters' needs
8 Expels
9 "Kapow!"
10 Freighter capacity
11 Hodgepodges
12 Finds a tenant
13 Rope's slipknot
21 Stared
22 Time periods
23 Gorges, maybe
24 — box
25 White cliffs town
29 I or U
30 Droplets
32 Elk
33 Eclipse phenomenon
34 Greek column type
35 Steer clear of
36 Asked out
42 Trespass
46 Universe
47 Sweden's sea
48 "Be quiet!"
49 "— diem!"
50 More weird
51 Dwarf cousin
52 Goes wild over
54 "— Breaky Heart"
55 Church part
59 Tyson stat
60 Always, to Byron
61 Banned bug spray

Weekend's answer



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3 SPORTS

Last licks

Flyers, Temple in action

College Bowl games not your thing? There is plenty of local action on the last day of 2014 as the Temple Owls head to Hartford to battle conference foe UConn at 1 p.m. Leading up to the strike of midnight the Flyers drop the puck at 9 p.m. Wednesday in Colorado.

NEVER TOO EARLY TO START LOOKING AT 2015

We Giants fans can't even get the taste of champagne out of our mouths before questions about next season arise. Who will be the Odell Beckham, C.J. Anderson or Russell Wilson that will lead us back to the promised land?

All of that will be sifted out over the next eight months via free agency, the draft, minicamps and training camp. But it's never too early to dream about 2015's first round.

To RB or not to RB

Thanks to early-round running back busts like LeSean McCoy, Adrian Peterson, Doug Martin, Zac Stacy and Montee Ball, there's going to be a lot of "zero RB" talk next summer. There are valid points to the strategy, as running backs are the most likely to get hurt and are most replaceable by real-life teams. Still, there are land mines at other positions as well (Peyton Manning, Jimmy Graham, Julius Thomas, Brandon Marshall). I would not pass on volume/touchdown machines like Le'Veon Bell, Eddie Lacy and DeMarco Murray in the top-8 picks.

Beckham Jr. is sure to be a top wideout in 2015. / GETTY IMAGES

Thin at tight end

The tight end position has regressed to the point where there's literally only one that is consistently productive right now. Given the scarcity, Rob Gronkowski (who has an incredible 44 TDs in his last 49 regular season games) should be a first-round pick in all formats. And even though Graham and Drew Brees scuffled down the stretch, I think we'll come to learn that had a lot to do with the tight end's shoulder. Graham will be a first-rounder for me as well.

Old dirty receiver

Odell "ODB" Beckham finished as fantasy's No. 9 wideout despite missing just about all of the offseason program, all of training camp and the first four games of the year. There's little reason to think he will regress in year two, locking him in as a borderline first-round option. The only wideouts I'd take above him right now are Antonio Brown, Demaryius Thomas, Jordy Nelson, and Dez Bryant.

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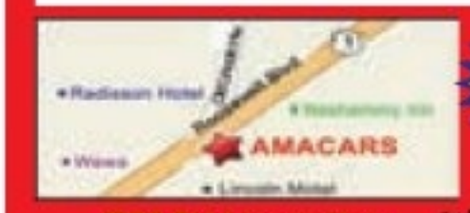

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$9900, $193/Month

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$0 Down
$9900, $193/Month

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44k Miles
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$14,900, $274/Month

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$0 Down
$15,900, $291/Month

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CXL
$15,900, $291/Month

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28k Miles
$16,900, $307/Month

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34k Miles, CD/MP3/USB, Satellite Radio, Bluetooth, OnStar, Heated Leather Seats, Alloy Wheels, Dual Climate Control, Cruise Control
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$0 Down
$19,900, $356/Month

2013 BUICK LACROSSE
CD/MP3/USB, Satellite Radio, Bluetooth, Heated Leather Seats, OnStar, Alloy Wheels, Rear View Camera, Navigation, Dual Climate Control
$0 Down
$19,900, $356/Month

2007 GMC YUKON DENALI
CD/MP3, Navigation, Heated Leather Seats, AWD, Running Boards, Privacy Glass, Roof Rack, Dual Zone Climate Control, Moonroof
$0 Down
$23,900, $420/Month

2011 RAM LARAMIE CREW CAB
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Top 10 stories of 2014

It wasn't a particularly proud year for Philly sports fans. But amid off-field controversies and lackluster performances on the fields, there were still a handful of bright spots for tortured fans in the City of Brotherly Love this past year.

BY EVAN MACY

Taney Little League became a household name after their improbable run in 2014. / CHARLES MOSTOLLER

1 Mo'ne Davis and the Taney Dragons

They are the Little League team that captured not only the heart of the city, but took national acclaim as they fell short of a World Series title. They returned home from Williamsport as rock stars, receiving a parade down Broad Street and honors from the Phillies, Eagles and Flyers.

As for Mo'ne Davis — the young woman whose overhand fastball will inspire inner city girls for generations to pick up a baseball and hang with the boys — don't be surprised if she winds up on a list similar to this in the not-so-distant future.

2 Phillies toss combined no-hitter

For all the times Cole Hamels wasn't provided the run support he deserved, perhaps one late summer afternoon made it all OK.

The lefty went six innings against the Braves on Sept. 1 without allowing a hit. Then Jake Diekman, Ken Giles and Jonathan Papelbon kept it going to complete the fourth ever four-man no hitter. The Phillies, of course, would finish dead last in the division by season's end.

HAMELS NOW HAS WORLD SERIES MVP AND A (COMBINED) NO HITTER ON HIS RESUME. GETTY IMAGES

3 Birds massacre Cowboys on Thanksgiving

It was literally the most-watched television event of the fall season. And the Eagles made everyone believers, pounding the Cowboys on Thanksgiving Day to the tune of 33-10. Everything went right for the Birds, who seized solo first in the NFC East, highlighted by 159 rushing yards for LeSean McCoy.

Of course, it wouldn't be a Philadelphia moment if there wasn't a catch. Big D came to town in December to even the score with their 38-27 win, giving the Eagles' playoff hopes a major setback.

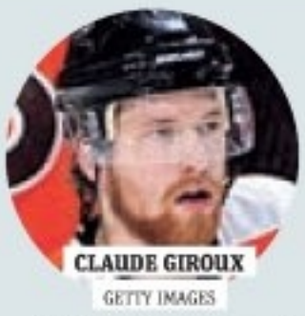
5 Jackson leaves town

The drama leading up to DeSean Jackson leaving town was only equaled in fervor by the confusion (still) and outrage when he finally did. Citing that the All-Pro wide receiver was not "buying into" Chip Kelly's system, the Eagles cut the wideout during the 2014 offseason. His two 50-plus yard receptions vs. the Birds in Week 16 ended Philly's playoff hopes.

Jackson leads the NFL in yards per catch. / GETTY IMAGES

4 Flyers take Rangers to brink

The 2013-2014 season was a wild ride for the Flyers, who were able to overcome a horrific start and a new coach to earn a playoff berth and battle against rivals the Rangers in the first round.



CLAUDE GIROUX GETTY IMAGES

Philly got spectacular goaltending from backup Ray Emery and was able to force a Game 7 in the unfriendly confines of Madison Square Garden.

But the team just wasn't speedy or accurate enough to overcome a barrage of Rangers blocked shots and Henrik Lundqvist in net as they fell in the decisive game.

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6 Rollins becomes Phils hit king

It wasn't long ago that most Phillies fans thought shortstop Jimmy Rollins would retire as a Phillie.

But he was traded to Los Angeles in December, retiring his Phillies' hit record of 2,306 hits.

Back in mid-summer, J-Roll did provide Phils fans one last fleeting memory when he passed Mike Schmidt as the team's all-time leader to much pomp and circumstance.

He'll return to the city as a Dodger in August.

Jimmy Rollins / GETTY IMAGES

9 Papelbon makes an adjustment

It wasn't necessarily a moment that, in and of itself, was meaningful to Philly sports fans. But when Phillies' closer Jonathan Papelbon was ejected from a game for "adjusting" himself toward fans and the umpire, it was sort of a microcosm of the year for Philadelphia teams.

The dysfunction at Citizens Bank Park seems to be the same that is occurring across the Philly sports landscape, with personnel issues keeping each franchise from taking the next step.

New year's resolutions. Some suggestions for Philly sports teams

It seems we have reached a low point in recent Philly sports history. It will be (more or less) an entire year without a playoff appearance for a local Big Four team and things aren't looking too bright for 2015, either. As we turn the page on 2014, here are some new year's resolutions our local teams should consider making.

1 Phillies: Fire Ruben Amaro Jr. as GM

It's probably fair to assume the Phillies are sticking with their GM, as decisions regarding front office personnel typically takes place before the offseason really picks up steam. But this calendar year, before 2015 ends, the Phils must hire a new general manager. Since Amaro took over in 2009, the Phillies have dropped from first place in the NL to the bottom. In the six seasons he has called the shots, the Phillies went from World Series runners up to trading Jimmy Rollins to start a long-overdue rebuild.

2 Flyers: Get the top line some help

The Flyers have been playing better hockey as 2014 comes to a close. But it's clearly the work of Claude Giroux and Jakub Voracek — each man entrenched near the top of the NHL scoring list and each burdened with carrying the weight of the offense with them. Sure, the Flyers need to get quicker at the blue line and need a healthy Steve Mason to get back into position for a playoff spot. But the secondary scoring assets, guys like Vincent Lecavalier and R.J. Umberger can't just skate around collecting paychecks.

JEREMY MACLIN HAD A CAREER YEAR FOR THE EAGLES. GETTY IMAGES

3 Eagles: Give the secondary an overhaul

The Eagles have one of the best offenses in football. They have a special teams unit that was probably the best in the NFL in 2014 and a pass rush that has produced sack after sack all season long. What's the weak link? The Eagles' secondary has been putrid. It's been awful. When not committing third down penalties to give opposing offenses new life, it's getting burnt down the field by Dez Bryant or DeSean Jackson. There is little doubt that even an average secondary (one that doesn't include liabilities Bradley Fletcher and Cary Williams) would have gotten the Birds into the playoffs.

4 76ers: Keep on losing games

Nerlens Noel and Michael Carter-Williams have shown glimpses of being NBA playoff-type pieces, but the Sixers are far from playoff contention. Adding Joel Embiid and Dario Saric in upcoming seasons could make the 76ers a defensive powerhouse, but they'll need to keep tanking, getting draft picks, and opening up cap room. Once this team has a chance to compete, watch out — they'll be a force.

EVAN MACY

7 The 76ers lose 26 straight games

The 76ers barely avoided setting a very dubious pro sports record when they limited their record-tying losing streak to 26 games last spring. Had they lost to the Pistons (who they defeated handily) at the end of March, they would have lost the most consecutive games of any pro team ever in any sport. The one bright spot was Michael Carter-Williams running away with NBA Rookie of the Year honors.

MICHAEL CARTER-WILLIAMS GETTY IMAGES

Joel Embiid / GETTY IMAGES

8 Sixers draft Embiid, Saric

The draft was thrust into chaos this summer when Joel Embiid got injured working out for a potential suitor, followed by the 76ers drawing the No. 3 spot in the draft instead of the second spot where they were projected to fall.

As a result, Sixers GM Sam Hinkie pushed his rebuild back a few seasons, taking the injured big man Embiid at No. 3 and using Philly's second first rounder to take Dario Saric, whose contract overseas keeps him from coming to the NBA for at least a season.

10 Flyers honor LeClair, Lindros

The Flyers are battling their way back after some early-season struggles but none of that mattered during a special pre-game ceremony a few weeks ago honoring the contributions of former Flyers John LeClair and Eric Lindros.

Both returned to Philly after a period of time during which no reunion was thought possible.

And both gave dedicated Flyers fans the opportunity to look back at a memorable run in the 1990s with the Legion of Doom striking fear across the NHL.

Perhaps not coincidentally, the Flyers were able to end the calendar year with a strong road trip.

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